

Message Text

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ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 EA-07 IO-10 ISO-00 AF-06 ARA-06 EUR-12 NEA-10

FEA-01 AGR-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00 FRB-03

H-02 INR-07 INT-05 L-03 LAB-04 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01

AID-05 CIEP-01 SS-15 STR-04 TAR-01 TRSE-00 USIA-06

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6577

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: GATT, ETRD, AS

SUBJECT: GATT ARTICLE XIX CONSULTATIONS WITH AUSTRALIA ON
STEEL SHEET AND PLATE

REF: (A) STATE 231862 (B) GENEVA 7775

1. SUBJECT CONSULTATIONS HELD OCTOBER 28. US INDICATED OUR PRIORITY REMAINS REMOVAL AUSTRALIAN QRS NO LATER THAN JANUARY 1, 1976, AND US CONTINUES FEEL COMPENSATORY CONCESSIONS ARE BEST MEANS OF HANDLING IMPAIRMENT. WE NOTED HOWEVER THAT IF COMMITMENT COULD BE MADE BY AUSTRALIA TO REMOVE QRS BY OUR REQUESTED DATE, US WOULD BE PREPARED CONSIDER THIS TO CONSTITUTE AGREEMENT AS PROVIDED ARTICLE XIX:3(A). WE NOTED US WOULD EXPECT SIMILAR TREATMENT FROM AUSTRALIA IN SIMILAR CIRCUMSTANCES INVOLVING US ACTIONS.

2. AUSTRALIA (DEPUTY SECRETARY WOODS OF DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIES) INDICATED THAT WHILE IT THEORETICALLY POSSIBLE AUSTRALIA MIGHT REMOVE RESTRICTIONS BEFORE INDUSTRY
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ASSISTANCE COMMISSION REPORT IS ISSUED, AND INDEED GOA

NOT BOUND AWAIT RESULTS OF REPORT, IT UNLIKELY GOA WOULD IN FACT ACT BEFORE REPORT AVAILABLE. WOODS NOTED HOWEVER THAT REPORT NOW EXPECTED IN FEBRUARY 1976. THIS IS CHANGE FROM "MARCH AT VERY EARLIEST" WHICH HAD BEEN INDICATED BEFORE. WE NOTED THIS, THEN, WOULD SEEM LEAVE US IN POSITION EXPLAINED AT EARLIER CONSULTATION, I.E., OF SEEKING COMPENSATION FOR ENTIRE TIME PERIOD RESTRICTIONS IN EFFECT. WOODS ASKED HOW CLOSELY US WAS TIED TO EXACT DATE JANUARY 1, 1976. WE INDICATED WE COULD NOT SAY.

3. WOODS STATED THAT US HAD THUS FAR SUPPLIED ONLY SIX RPT SIX TONS, THUS FALLING FAR SHORT OF PRE-QUOTA SHIPMENT LEVELS. HE NOTED THAT JAPAN NOW SUPPLYING 99.6 PERCENT OF ALL IMPORTS INTO AUSTRALIA, THEREBY DISPLACING US, KOREA, GERMANY. HE INDICATED PRICE WAS DETERMINING FACTOR AND ADDED THAT JAPANESE STEEL PRICES HAVE DROPPED BY 25 PERCENT SINCE MID-1974.

4. WOODS ADDED ON GENERAL TERMS THAT AUSTRALIAN PROBLEM WITH JAPANESE IMPORTS APPEARS TO BE GROWING AND GAVE EXAMPLE OF AUTOMOBILE IMPORTS. SAID JAPAN SUPPLIED 14 PERCENT OF AUSTRALIAN MARKET IN 1973, 32 PERCENT FOR FULL YEAR 1974, BUT 52 PERCENT IN DECEMBER 1974. WOODS NOTED THAT RASH OF RESTRICTIONS ISSUED BY AUSTRALIA EARLIER IN YEAR APPEARS TO HAVE RUN ITS COURSE; ALMOST NO NEW RESTRICTIONS ANNOUNCED IN RECENT MONTHS.

5. COMMENT: BOTH WOODS AND TEESE OF GENEVA MISSION COMMENTED THAT IT APPEARED BE WIDELY MISUNDERSTOOD THAT GOVERNMENT CHANGE IN AUSTRALIA WOULD RESULT IN MORE LIBERAL TRADE POLICY. BOTH MAINTAINED THIS ASSUMPTION IS ERRONEOUS. ABRAMS

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